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The situation in the Middle East

Question of Palestine

Security Council
Sixty-first year

Letter dated 23 March 2006 from the Permanent Observer of Palestine to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

I wish to draw your attention to the serious situation concerning a group of Palestinians who have fled persecution amid the violence in Iraq. Since Sunday, 19 March 2006, over 89 Palestinians, nearly half of them children, have been stranded in no-man's-land on the Iraqi-Jordanian border. The Palestinians, including two elderly people and three with medical problems, are in an extremely precarious situation under the harsh desert climate. They have little shelter and have meagre food supplies, and it is extremely difficult for the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees to protect and assist these Palestinian refugees owing to the Office's limited access to the border area.

There are approximately 23,000 Palestinians who are registered as refugees in Baghdad. The Palestinian community living in Iraq has been fearful of violence against them, especially after 10 Palestinians were killed and several kidnapped in Baghdad just over the past week.

In this regard, we call on the international community to immediately intervene in this grave matter and to ensure the safety and well-being of the group of Palestinians who have fled persecution in Iraq and who are now stranded on the Iraqi-Jordanian border, as well as the Palestinian community still living in Iraq.

I would be grateful if you would arrange to have the text of the present letter distributed as a document of the Security Council and under agenda items 14 and 15 of the General Assembly.

(*Signed*) Riyad **Mansour**
Ambassador
Permanent Observer of Palestine to the United Nations

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